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ABSTRACT

This manual is for experienced group leaders who will be training parents, educators, or policymakers to use the Middle Grades Assessment Program to evaluate how schools are responding to the developmental needs of adolescents. This manual is to be used in conjunction with the user's manual and a slide-tape presentation. The user's manual provides a checklist of observation items and interview questions that relate the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social needs of young adolescents to the school environment. Techniques for training people in the use of the school observation and assessment checklist are presented in this manual, which is divided into two sections: (1) training in the observation and assessment of a school; and (2) leading the assessment team members to share and summarize their information. Two modules provide guidelines for clarifying the group's philosophy and objectives, building a consensus, and reviewing and practicing observation and interviewing skills. Activities are recommended for sharing and summarizing the observations of the group following a school visit. (JD)

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MIDDLE GRADES ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Leader's Manual

Gayle Dorman

Center for Early Adolescence

SP 019 518

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Leader's Manual

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Note to the Leader:
This manual is intended to be used with the accompanying *User's Manual* and the slide-tape presentation. Leaders and users are encouraged to complete the entire *Middle Grades Assessment Program*, which includes the training sessions outlined in this manual and at least one visit to the school.

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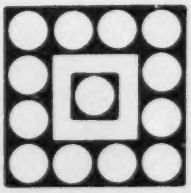

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Table of Contents

Page

I. How to Use This Manual 1

II. Preparing for the School Observation and Assessment 3

A. Objectives for the Training 3

B. Module I: Clarifying Philosophy and Building Consensus 5

1. Getting Acquainted and Gathering Information
2. Clarifying Philosophy
3. Defining the Purpose for Using the *Program*
4. Reviewing Information on Adolescent Development and Effective Schools
5. Closing the Session

C. Module II: Reviewing and Practicing Observation and Interviewing Skills 13

1. Observing and Assessing Middle Grade Schools: A Slide-tape Presentation
2. Practicing Interviewing and Listening Skills
3. Reviewing Observation Skills
4. Making Logistical Decisions About the School Visit
5. Planning for the Sharing and Summarizing Session
6. Closing the Session

III. Sharing and Summarizing Session 21

A. Objectives for the Session 21

B. Recommended Activities 21

1. Describing Feelings and General Observations
2. Sharing and Summarizing Observations and Assessments
3. Deciding Priorities for Study and Action

C. Possible Activities for Choosing a Plan of Action 25

1. Summarizing and Preparing to Choose a Plan of Action
2. Preparing a Written Report
2. Using Brainstorming and Force Field Analysis to Choose a Plan of Action
4. Conducting an Inventory of the Capabilities of Individual Group Members

I. How to Use This Manual

Parents, educators, policymakers, and community organizations can use the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* to determine if their schools encourage young adolescents to learn and mature in a secure, responsive environment and then to engage in joint discussion and decision making about their schools.

The *Middle Grades Assessment Program* consists of this *Leader's Manual*, a slide-tape presentation, and a *User's Manual*. The *User's Manual* includes a Checklist of observation items and interview questions that relate the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social needs of young adolescents to the school environment. It offers a way to look at schools in terms of what we know that young adolescents need for healthy growth and provides a bibliography and resource list for further reading about schools and early adolescent development. The slide presentation with accompanying audiotape presents illustrations of school scenes to sharpen the Checklist user's observation skills.

This *Leader's Manual* presents techniques for training people in the use of the school observation and assessment Checklist. The manual is divided into two main sections: 1) training in preparation for the school observation and assessment and 2) leading the assessment team to share and summarize their information after the school visits. The two training sessions to be held prior to the school visit are outlined in detail for the leader. It will be the leader's responsibility, however, to design the sharing and summarizing session by choosing from among the alternative activities presented in the last section. Each group will have developed its unique purpose, process, and capabilities that the leader must consider when designing this session. The entire *Leader's Manual* is intended to be a guide for the leader, whose responsibility it is to help the assessment team meet the objectives listed on page 3, as well as to accomplish its purpose for using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*.

This manual is written for persons who are experienced group leaders. While the activities are outlined in detail, it is assumed that the leader has a solid working knowledge of group process and adult education theory and practice. The leader should also know and understand young adolescents and be committed to helping schools be more responsive to the developmental needs of the age group. Finally, the leader should have a basic understanding of the intricacies of school operation and school change in the community. Naturally, the leader will read and be thoroughly familiar with the *User's Manual*. Chapter 6 of the *User's Manual* is a bibliography and resource list that provides suggestions for additional reading in the areas of early adolescent development and schooling for the age group.

As the assessment team and leader use the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*, they may need additional information or resources to supplement the *Program*. This need will most likely occur as the team summarizes the information it has gained and establishes a plan of action for using that information to improve the school. The Center for Early Adolescence maintains an extensive information system that includes written and audiovisual materials, as well as information on model programs, available consultants, current research, youth policy, and training opportunities. The leader is encouraged to contact the Center with the assessment team's requests for information.

II. Preparing for the School Observation and Assessment

A. Objectives for the Training

Prior to using the Checklist to observe a school, an assessment team should meet the objectives below in a thorough and competent manner. Since the needs of specific groups vary greatly, the training designed to help groups meet these objectives is presented as two modules. Module I focuses on clarifying values, building consensus about the purpose of using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*, and reviewing information on adolescent development and effective schools. Module II focuses on improving observation and interviewing skills and planning for use of the findings. The time required to complete each training module is two to three hours. Both modules can be completed in one full day of training or in two or three evening sessions.

In order to best use the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* and to minimize confusion and misunderstanding, **groups are strongly encouraged to complete both modules with a qualified leader.** All assessment team members should read and be thoroughly familiar with the *User's Manual* prior to beginning Module I.

Objectives:

Before entering a school to use the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*, individuals and groups will:

1. compare their philosophy with that which undergirds the *Program*;
2. define their purpose for using the *Program*;
3. review the current knowledge about early adolescence and effective schools;
4. practice school observation and assessment skills using the slide-tape presentation;
5. plan the school visit(s) using the suggested guidelines;
6. decide on a process for sharing and summarizing the information gained from the school visit (see Section III of this manual for possible activities);
7. discuss how the findings of the observation and assessment will be used to improve their school(s).

B. MODULE I
Clarifying Philosophy and Building Consensus

Objectives: #1, 2, 3, 7

Activity #1: **Getting Acquainted and Gathering Information**

Approximate Time Required: 10 minutes + 2 minutes per person (30 minutes for a group of 10 people)

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader asks participants to introduce themselves by answering the following questions about themselves:

1) Name
2) Connection with school; for example, parent, teacher, principal, school board member
3) Why are you here? What do you hope to accomplish by using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* to observe this school?

Leader emphasizes that question #3 is to be answered in *one sentence.*

Leader gives example of brief one-sentence responses to question #3. Encourage participants to be *specific* and *concise.*

2 minutes X number of participants

Leader begins by introducing him/herself. As participants introduce themselves, leader quickly writes responses to question #3 on a piece of newsprint headed, "Hope to accomplish."

Note to the leader: Be gentle but firm in enforcing the one-sentence limit or the activity will become long and counterproductive. In writing responses on the newsprint, write quickly (or ask someone else to write for you), summarizing statements but using the participant's own words. If you are unsure of the key words in a participant's sentence, ask the participant if your perception is correct before writing his/her contribution on newsprint. Encourage participants to talk by frequently and sincerely praising their contributions, summarizing, checking your perceptions with theirs, and pointing out similarities and differences among the sentences. *Do not let this activity drag on. Keep the pace brisk but supportive. Make sure everyone's ideas are included on the newsprint. DO NOT THROW AWAY THE NEWSPRINT AFTER THE SESSION.* You will use it again in this session, in the second session, and in the summarizing and planning session.

5 minutes

After each participant's introduction and completion of newsprint activity, leader summarizes statements given in response to question #3, briefly pointing out similarities and differences. Tell participants that newsprint will be left in a visible place and it will be used later.

Activity #2: **Clarifying Philosophy**

Approximate Time Required: 60 minutes

Instructions:

15 minutes

Leader reviews the concept of "philosophy" and discusses the impact of our philosophy on what we do and how we do it, as well as how we look at situations.

Leader quickly reviews philosophy that undergirds the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* (pp. 1-2 in *User's Manual).* Emphasize that different beliefs and philosophies are to be expected and are okay, but that similarities and differences in participants' philosophy and the philosophy of the *Program* must be explored before they can commit themselves to use the *Program*. Point out that the group must agree with the philosophy of the *Program* enough to have confidence in it as a guide in the observation and assessment of their school.

If there are more than 10 people on the assessment team, break the total group into smaller working groups of five to eight people each. The leader can give instructions and then monitor groups to keep them on task, or each group can have a facilitator trained by the leader beforehand.

Leader gives instructions:

1) Turn to page 2 in your manual, "Schools for Young Adolescents: The Philosophy of the Center for Early Adolescence." Read Section C.
2) As a group, discuss the following questions. One person take notes and be prepared to summarize the small group discussion for the entire group.
   a) Which of these statements, or parts of the statements, do you agree with?
      Why?
   b) Which of these statements, or parts of the statements, do you disagree with?
      Why?
   c) Is the meaning of any of these statements unclear to you?
      Which ones?
   d) If you have time left over after thoroughly discussing questions a, b, and c, try to decide *as a group*, which statement is most important, which is next most important, and on down to the least important. You should complete this task with the statements in rank order from #1 to 5.

25 minutes

3) Groups have 25 minutes to complete the task.

After 20 minutes, leader reminds groups that they have five more minutes to work.

After 25 minutes, leader calls for reconvening of the total group.

Leader asks the person who took notes (or one representative from each small group) to summarize group discussion on the four questions, limiting reports to three minutes each.

3 minutes X number of small groups

As reports are given, leader has three pieces of newsprint; one is labeled "Agree" and one "Disagree." Leader writes key words on appropriate paper to indicate areas upon which there is agreement and/or disagree-

ment with the stated philosophy. The third is labeled *Rankings* and looks like this:

Rankings

Group 1	Group 2	
_____	_____	Adolescence is a normal stage of human development that is no more transitional or pathological than any other stage.
_____	_____	This understanding of adolescence as a normal and exciting developmental stage should be the basis upon which decisions are made about schooling.
_____	_____	The education of young adolescents is a joint venture shared by educators, policymakers, parents, and citizens.
_____	_____	Parents, citizens, and educators need to know how to have a positive effect on the educational system.
_____	_____	Effective advocacy is more often collaborative than adversarial.

Record each group's rank order by placing the appropriate rank order numeral beside each statement.

Leader asks the question: "Do we as a group agree with the philosophy that undergirds this *Middle Grades Assessment Program* enough to base our observation and assessment of our school on this *Program?*" Leader facilitates discussion and helps group achieve consensus on this question. If the consensus answer is "Yes," then proceed. If the answer is "No," then carefully define the problem areas. Make a group decision about the next step. The group will probably not find the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* useful as a tool for observation, assessment, and dialogue if it answers "No" to this question, because it will not have confidence in the instrument.

Activity #3: **Defining the Purpose for Using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program***

Approximate Time Required: 35 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader talks briefly about the importance of the group's having a purpose for using the *Program*. People come with different ideas about what they hope to accomplish, but it is also important for the group to have a clearly defined purpose so that all the individuals are working toward the same goal.

If there are more than 10 people in the assessment team, leader asks participants to return to the small groups they were in for clarifying their philosophy. As groups are forming, give each group a piece of newsprint and a felt tip marker.

Leader gives instructions to the groups: "Our task now is to write a statement of purpose. Refer back to the individual answers to the question, 'What do you hope to accomplish by using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* to observe this school?' which we have posted here on newsprint. Each group is to discuss the answers you have given and *as a group* write a two-sentence statement of purpose on your newsprint that expresses why you want to observe the school and what you hope to accomplish by doing so. After each group has written a statement, we will post the newsprint and try to reach agreement as a total group on a statement of purpose. You will have 10 minutes to discuss and write your small group's statement of purpose."

10 minutes

The group works. Leader circulates to answer questions, makes sure the group understands the task, and checks on progress.

Leader calls small groups back together as a total group. Ask one person from each group (or a representative of the single group) to post its statement. Give participants time to read all the statements.

15 minutes

Leader facilitates group consensus on a statement of purpose. Instruct the group to choose one statement or rework several into a concise statement of purpose that expresses why they want to observe the school and what they hope to accomplish by doing so.

Note to the leader on reaching consensus: The purpose of reaching consensus is to arrive at a statement that everyone in the group can accept. Everyone may not be in full agreement with the final statement, but everyone will be able to go along with it. By reaching consensus instead of voting, you will avoid having a majority who wins and a minority who are forced into accepting a decision they do not agree with or support at all. Reaching consensus is harder for a group than simply voting, but the benefit is a better statement that everyone can agree with to some degree. Here are some suggestions on how groups reach consensus:

1) Members should avoid arguing in order to win as individuals. What is "right" is the best collective judgment of the group as a whole.
2) Conflict on ideas, solutions, predictions, etc., should be viewed as helping rather than hindering the process of seeking consensus.
3) Problems are solved best when individual group members accept responsibility for both hearing and being heard, so that everyone is included in what is decided.
4) Tension-reducing behaviors can be useful so long as meaningful conflict is not "smoothed over" prematurely.
5) Each member has the responsibility to monitor the processes through which work gets done and to initiate discussions of process when it is becoming effective.
6) The best results flow from a fusion of information, logic, and emotion. Value judgments about what is best include members' feelings about the data and the process of decision making.*

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And here are some specific suggestions on how leaders facilitate group consensus:

1) Explain consensus to the group, emphasizing that what is "right" is the best collective judgment of the group and that everyone does not have to agree 100%, but everyone should be able to go along with the final decision. Everyone will have to give and take.
2) Point out ideas that the group members have in common and ideas that are different.
3) Define the task again: to write a two-sentence statement that expresses why the group wants to observe the school and what it hopes to accomplish by doing so.
4) Ask: "From the ideas that have been expressed in the small groups or by individuals, which two or three do you think are more important?" Encourage the participants to begin by considering the ideas several individuals have in common.
5) Encourage questions and disagreements as long as the person who is disagreeing has an alternate idea to present.
6) Serve as the director and "gatekeeper" for the discussion, making sure everyone who wishes to speak has the opportunity to do so. Guide the discussion by summarizing what is being said and keeping the group on the task.
7) As the group discusses, you serve as the recorder. Post clean newsprint on the wall and write down ideas they agree upon and drafts of the statement of purpose. Make it very clear that what you are writing is not final until the group approves it, but that you are just summarizing and putting on paper what you hear them saying. This often helps prevent the group from becoming stuck in a long-drawn-out process that never produces a decision.
8) When the group reaches consensus on a statement of purpose, write it clearly on a clean sheet of newsprint. Post it in a prominent place and compliment the group on the quality and intensity of their work.
9) This process can take five minutes or half an hour depending on the number of people in the group, the variety of ideas presented, and willingness of the group to negotiate and discuss.
10) Do not allow one or two people to prevent the group from reaching consensus if everyone else agrees. Listen to and consider their views, but if it becomes clear no one else agrees with them, encourage them to focus on those parts of the statement with which they do agree. Remind the group that everyone may not agree with the statement 100%, but everyone should be able to go along with the statement. If someone seems to hold on to a hidden agenda that no one else is willing to adopt, it may become necessary to clearly but gently get the message across: "We hear your concern, but we are not willing to make it our group concern." At that point, the individual will have to decide whether or not to accept the group's decision and remain in the group. ***This is an extreme situation that seldom occurs.*** Be prepared for it, but do not expect it to happen. Instead, expect lively, intelligent discussion that results in true group consensus.

Activity #4: Reviewing Information on Adolescent Development and Effective Schools

Approximate Time Required: 35 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader introduces activity by asking participants to remember the information on adolescent development and effective schools they read in Chapters II and III of the *User's Manual*. Remind them that facts about adolescent development and the characteristics of effective schools were presented. This exercise will review that information and give them an opportunity to discuss the topics with each other.

Leader asks participants to divide into small groups of five or six people each, taking a pencil with them. As the groups are forming, pass out the Handout entitled "Myth or Reality," pp. 29-30. When the small groups are formed, tell the participants they have 10 minutes to complete the sheet by themselves. Tell them to work alone and after the 10 minutes are up they will receive further instructions on how to proceed. Assure them that this is *not* a test, that no one else will see their sheets unless they wish to share them, and that the purpose of the Handout is to help them remember what they read in the *User's Manual*.

10 minutes

Allow 10 minutes for the individuals to complete the sheet.

Leader gives each small group one copy of the Handout "Correct Answers for Myth or Reality" (p. 31) and the following instructions. "Here are the correct answers to the questions on the 'Myth or Reality' Handout. One person in each group can read the correct answers. Then take 15 minutes to discuss any items about which you have questions. For example, if several members of your group really thought that #2 was a reality, you will probably want to talk about that statement and maybe refer back to Chapter II in the *User's Manual*. Take 15 minutes to discuss your questions in the small group."

15 minutes

As the small groups discuss the items, the leader should circulate among the groups answering questions and referring back to the appropriate pages in the *User's Manual*. Remind participants that all the statements are based on what we know from research and practice. They may not *agree* with a statement, but it is based on sound research studies and observations. Give the groups a warning at the end of 10 minutes that they have 5 minutes left.

At the end of 15 minutes call the whole group back together.

Leader asks if there are one or two items about which the groups had disagreements or questions. Take just a couple of minutes to cite the basis for the correct information from the *User's Manual*. Summarize by pointing out that there are many myths about young adolescents and their schooling and many things we do not know, but that we do have a substantial amount of solid information. It is on this information and the philosophy we have already examined that the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* is based.

Activity #5: **Closing the Session**

Approximate Time Required: 10 minutes

10 minutes

Instructions:

Leader closes the session. Summarize what has been accomplished:

1) Participants have discussed their thoughts on why they want to observe the school.
2) Group members have examined their own philosophies and the philosophy underlying the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* and decided to use (or not to use) the *Program*.
3) Group has decided upon a statement of purpose. Review the statement.
4) Group has reviewed information on adolescent development and effective schools.

Summarize why these decisions are important and necessary prerequisites to observing the school.

Note to the leader: Instead of summarizing this yourself, you can ask the group members to summarize what they have learned from this session and why they think this is an important step.

Present an overview of the next session. The group will:

1) practice their observation and interviewing skills and
2) make definite plans for the school visit and the debriefing session.

Remind participants of the date, time, and place of the next session.

C. Module II
Reviewing and Practicing Observation and Interviewing Skills

Objectives: #4, 5, 6, 7

Activity #1: **Observing and Assessing Middle Grade Schools: A Slide-tape Presentation.**

Approximate Time Required: 30 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader introduces the slide-tape presentation as a review of early adolescent development and an overview of the skills and techniques necessary to observe and assess schools accurately.

Before beginning the slide-tape presentation, the leader states that during this session the participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and practice the skills presented in the slide-tape. Point out that the slide-tape is a review of some of the material in their manuals. Inform them that you will stop the slide-tape after the section that reviews early adolescent development so that they can discuss any questions they may have about what they have seen and heard.

10 minutes

Leader shows the first half of the slide-tape, turning off the projector and recorder during the pause in slide #33.

Note to the leader: It is imperative that you preview the slide-tape. Be thoroughly familiar with its content. Also, have the projector, screen, and tape recorder set up and ready to begin before you open the session. You should be able simply to turn on the projector and tape recorder when you are ready to begin. The slide-tape should be interrupted with a short break at slide #33, because most people's attention begins to lag after about 10 minutes of a presentation. This natural break in the content of the slide-tape provides an opportunity for a change of pace before continuing with the second half. You should be familiar with the slide-tape so that you recognize the pause on the audiotape during slide #33, which is your signal to turn off the projector and recorder.

5 minutes

After turning off the equipment at the pause in slide #33, the leader asks the participants if they have any questions or comments about the material reviewed in the slide-tape so far. Discussion should be brief. If there are no questions or comments, leader can make a summarizing statement, such as, "So far we have reviewed the developmental needs of young adolescents and begun to see how schools can be responsive to those needs. Let's go on with the second part of the slide-tape presentation. This segment will introduce the observation and interview forms."

10 minutes

Leader starts projector and recorder and completes the showing of the slide-tape presentation.

Activity #2: **Practicing Interviewing and Listening Skills**

Approximate Time Required: 55 minutes

Instructions:

Note to the leader: Throughout this session, you will refer back to specific slides. It is suggested that you disconnect the recorder's synchronizing cord from the projector and turn the carousel tray by hand to the slide being discussed.

5 minutes

Leader will introduce the activity by referring back to slides #46, 48 and 49 of the slide-tape presentation, which list tips for successful interviewing and listening. Point out that interviewing to gain specific information and understanding is more complicated than just sitting down to chat with someone. Participants have read about skills that will aid them in conducting the interviews, and now they will have the opportunity to practice some of those skills with each other.

Ask participants to take their *User's Manuals*, a blank piece of paper, and a pen or pencil with them as they form groups of three people each.

5 minutes

Leader introduces the Interview Form by reviewing "Instructions For Using the Checklist," p. 19, items #1-5, and the "Additional Instructions For Using the Interview Form" on p. 19. Answer any questions the participants have about using the forms, but do not get involved in deciding logistics, such as which assessment team members will interview which teachers. If such questions arise, inform participants that the group will make those decisions later. Now you are concentrating on improving skills.

5 minutes

Ask participants to take five minutes to read over "Interviewing Skills" and "Listening Skills" (p. 18) in the *User's Manual*. While participants are reading, post two pieces of newsprint with this information on them.

#1

PRACTICING INTERVIEWING AND LISTENING

Task	Time
Interview #1	5 min.
Feedback	5 min.
Interview #2	5 min.
Feedback	5 min.
Interview #3	5 min.
Feedback	5 min.
Total	30 min.

#2

QUESTIONS FOR FEEDBACK TIME

Be honest, kind, and specific.

1. For the interviewer: What do you think you did well? What do you think you did that could be improved?
2. For the interviewee: What did the interviewer do or say that made you want to talk freely? What did he/she do that was distracting or that made you want *not* to talk?
3. For observer: What were the specific strengths of the interviewer? What skills need improvement?

5 minutes

Leader gives the following instructions: "We are divided into groups of three so that everyone will have the opportunity to practice interviewing another person with the Interview Forms, to be interviewed by someone else, and to observe and give feedback on an interview. This is how we will conduct the interviews. The person in your group nearest to me will pretend he or she is an assessment team member actually in the school using the Interview Form and taking notes. The interviewer will use the blank sheet of paper to write down key words in the interviewee's responses. Please don't use the Interview Form in the *User's Manual*. Save that for your actual school visit.

"The person seated to the interviewer's right will pretend to be either the teacher or student being interviewed. The respondents will answer interview questions as they think they would if they were actually students or teachers. If you *are* a teacher or a student, then you don't have to pretend; just be yourself. The interviewer will decide which set of questions to use and tell the interviewee whether to assume the role of a student or a teacher. The third person in the group will observe the interview, taking note of the strengths and weaknesses of the interviewer's skills. The observer will also be the timekeeper. At the end of five minutes the observer will stop the interview. The observer will then lead a brief discussion (five minutes) of the interview using the questions on the newsprint.

"Remember to *be specific* in your feedback for the interview. The purpose of this practice is to improve your skills. It's nice to hear 'That was great,' but it's much more helpful to hear 'Your posture was relaxed and your eye contact was constant.' On the same note, it doesn't help very much to hear 'I felt uncomfortable and really didn't want to answer the questions.' It does help to hear 'You asked a question but then didn't give me enough time to think and to answer. You moved too fast,' or 'You were so busy writing down what I said, I felt like you weren't really listening to me. You looked at the paper rather than at me.'

"When the first interview and feedback time is completed, all three people in each group change roles and begin the second interview. For example, the first interviewer will become the observer in the second interview, the first interviewee will become the interviewer, and the observer will become the interviewee. Conduct the interview and feedback, then change roles again. Everyone should have the opportunity to fill all three roles once. Any questions?"

Note to the leader: Although this activity is rather simple once people catch on, it may be difficult to explain. Be sure to ask if there are any questions and answer them carefully, using a specific group as an example. As the interviews begin, rotate among the groups to make sure no one is confused. It will also be your responsibility to keep time for the groups. Remind the observers that they are to stop the interview at the end of five minutes. You call time at the end of each 10 minute segment and encourage the groups to move on to the next interview. Monitor the feedback to make sure it is *specific* and helpful to the interviewers. You may have to ask questions of the small groups; for instance, "But what did he/she *do* or *say* to make you think or feel that?"

5 minutes

At the end of 30 minutes, leader calls the whole group back together. Ask: "What did you learn about interviewing and listening that you think will help you when you go into the school?" Take about five minutes to summarize the important points.

BREAK

Activity #3: **Reviewing Observation Skills**

Approximate Time Required: 50 minutes

Instructions:

10 minutes

Ask participants to review the following sections in their manual: "Guidelines for Use," pp. 15-16, items #1-4. "Instructions for Using the Checklist," p. 19, items #1, 6-10. "Observation Skills," p. 18.

5 minutes

When they are finished, ask if there are any questions about how to mark the Observation Form. Answer any questions that arise, but do not get involved in logistics such as how many classes to observe and the acceptable protocol. Inform them that logistical questions will be answered later. For now, you are concentrating on improving observation skills.

30 minutes

Leader will lead discussion as follows:

1. Leader introduces three major points discussed in the manual and slide-tape: 1) do not jump to conclusions, 2) look for a composite picture of the school, and 3) always keep in mind the *need* related to the observation item. Ask the participants to turn to the Observation Form (p. 43) in their manuals. Tell them that you are going to project some of the slides onto the screen. They are to imagine that they are in a school, and what they see on the screen is a scene they are observing in the school. Encourage them to remember what they *heard* about each scene in the slide-tape presentation. As a group you will discuss the observation items that could appropriately be checked based on the information you obtain from each scene.

Show slide #55, pointing out that the observer in the slide-tape show initially planned to mark "Yes" to items #32 and 33; however (show slide #56), based on observation over an entire class period and from a different vantage point, the observer checked "No" to items #32 and 33 (show slide #57), as well as items #23 and 30.

Show slide #58, Ask: "If you went into this noisy, active social studies classroom, what would be your initial reaction? What items would you be tempted to check based on your initial observation?"

Show slide #59, reminding the participants that in the class the teacher later had students summarize their debate on government organization and prepare an outline for a written essay.

Ask: "After observing the successful conclusion of this class, what items would you check?" (Participants could probably check "Yes" to items #16, 20, 30, 31, 32, 33.)

Remind the participants that people often have biases about seating arrangements and noise levels in classrooms, assuming that their preferred or familiar arrangements ensure learning. Challenge this bias and encourage the participants to use the observation items to examine carefully what is going on in each classroom without jumping to conclusions or acting on their personal biases.

Show slides #62 and 63, saying that open classrooms are another way of using space in a school. A careful observer will use the observation items to assess what is actually going on in that space. Observation of an open classroom *may* be more difficult than observation of a traditional classroom, because the number of people and activities is usually much greater. The observer must look carefully at both the individual people and activities and the open classroom as a whole. Again, people often have biases for or against open classrooms, but those biases should not deter the observer from gathering accurate information about the open classroom.

Show slides #64 and 65. Point out that before an observer could check "Yes" to items #2 and 39, they would have to ask if the displays and projects were done by students or staff. *Who* created the display is

more important than its attractiveness. Again, do not jump to the conclusion that the attractive displays you see throughout a school are the product of student work.

Leader summarizes the first major point, "Do not jump to conclusions," by stating that these slides are just examples of situations the participants might see in a school which would tempt them to jump to conclusions. Ask the participants to name other situations they expect to encounter where it would be tempting to jump to conclusions. It is crucial that they base their marks on the Observation Form on what they see and hear over an appropriate length of time, not on initial reactions, mere glances, or personal biases. After they have gathered accurate information about the school, they will have opportunities to interpret that information.

2. Show slide #67. Ask: "If you were to observe a class that looked like this for most of the class time, what items would you check?" (Participants will probably say "No" for items #16, 32, 33, 36, and 40.) Remind participants of the second major point: "Look for a composite picture of the school." This may be the only disruptive classroom in the entire school. Instruct the participants to observe several classrooms, making a mark for each classroom on the Classroom Instruction Observation Form.

Prepare a piece of newsprint beforehand as illustrated below. Use the newsprint as an example of what the Classroom Instruction Observation Form may look like when completed:

		Yes	No
SI	14. Teacher greets students as they enter classroom.	✓ ✓ ✓	✓

This assessment team member observed four classrooms. In three classes the teachers greeted the students as they entered; in one classroom the teacher did not greet the students. When the school visit is complete, the observer will review the marks for all items coded SI and make an assessment of whether the school is responsive to young adolescents' need for positive social interaction with adults and peers. For all other sections of the Observation Form, the observer will carefully observe and make only one mark for each item that represents his/her observations of the entire school. Observers may wish to use the "Comments" section at the bottom of each page to record qualifying remarks. Remind the participants that all of the information they gather will be compiled and summarized to answer the question, "Is this school responsive to the developmental needs of young adolescents?"

3. Ask participants to notice that each observation item is coded to one of the needs of young adolescents. Remind the participants that each item is to be viewed as *one piece of evidence* that the school is or is not responsive to the particular need to which it is coded. As observers, they must look beyond the overt behavior and scenes they see and make a determination as to whether the *need* is being taken into consideration. Also, they must look for additional ways the school does or does not respond to each need. Emphasize that the items describe the activities and scenes one would expect to observe in a school that is responsive to the developmental needs of young adolescents, but that all schools are different and the items should be viewed as *evidence*, not proof, of responsiveness. Also, no single item is an adequate measure of responsiveness to a need.

Note to the leader: See "Guidelines for Use," pp. 15-16, especially items #2, 3, and 4.

5 minutes

Leader asks if there are any questions about using the Observation Form. Answer questions quickly and concisely.

Activity #4: **Making Logistical Decisions about the School Visit**

Approximate Time Required: 20 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader introduces this activity by saying that the group is now ready to make definite plans for the school visit. Leader asks the participants to review "Guidelines for Visiting Schools," p. 17. Allow five minutes for the group to review these pages. As they read the pages, leader post pieces of newsprint with the following questions written on it:

Decisions to be Made

1. **Will the entire assessment team go to the school on the same day or will different members go on separate days?**

2. **How much time will the observers spend in the school?** Two or three whole days? Portions of two or more days at different times of the day?

3. **By what date will all the school observations be completed?**

4. **Who will call the principal** to arrange a time for the visit(s)? Each individual or a representative of the group?

5. **If the principal has not been involved up to this point, how will you inform him or her of your purpose for the observation?** Who will offer to introduce him/her to the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*? When will this be done?

6. **Who will conduct the following interviews:**
   - General interview with the principal (team of two people)
   - Curriculum interview with the principal (team of two people)
   - Interview with the guidance counselor(s) (individuals or teams of two people for each guidance counselor)
   - Everyone will conduct interviews with teachers, students, and parents.

7. **Who will arrange appointments** for the following:
   - General interview with the principal
   - Curriculum interview with the principal
   - Interview with the guidance counselor(s)
   - Teacher interviews (every assessment team member interviews at least one teacher)
   - Student interviews (every assessment team member interviews at least one student)
   - Parent interviews (every assessment team member interviews at least one parent)
   - How will the arrangements be communicated to the other assessment team members?

8. **Who will ask the principal about acceptable protocol?** Is it okay to "float" in and out of classes or do teachers expect visitors to enter before class begins and remain until it ends? What is the best time and place to talk to teachers? (Will each individual do this or will a representative of the group? If a representative does it, how will the information be communicated to the other observers?)

9. Other . . .

15 minutes

At the end of five minutes, ask if there are any questions about the Guidelines. Answer them quickly and concisely or ask other members of the group to answer them. Bring the group's attention to the questions on the newsprint. Begin with question #1 and lead the group in answering each question, referring back to specific suggestions in the *User's Manual*. You can write their decisions beside the questions in order to have a record for future reference. When question #8 has been completed, ask if there are any other decisions to be made. If there are, list the question(s) and the decision(s) on additional newsprint. This process should take about 15 minutes.

Leader closes by summarizing the decisions that have been made.

Activity #5: **Planning for the Sharing and Summarizing Session**

Approximate Time Required: 5 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader reminds the group of the summarizing and planning session to be held when the observations are complete. Summarize the three goals of that session: 1) to share observations and assessments of the school, 2) to discuss implications of the findings, and 3) to decide how to use the findings to improve their school for young adolescents.

Leader assists group in setting a time and date for the debriefing session and reminds the group that it is important for each observer to complete the Summarizing Sheets (pp. 51-59) before the session.

Leader refers back to newsprint (which has been posted on a side or back wall throughout the session) from the first session that lists the answers to the question, "What do you hope to accomplish by using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program?*" Review two or three of the most popular ideas very quickly. Ask the participants to read over the ideas after the session and keep the question in mind as they observe the school and prepare for the debriefing session. Tell them they will add new ideas to the list before making decisions as a group on how to use what they learn.

Activity #6: **Closing the Session**

Approximate Time Required: 5 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader summarizes decisions that have been made. Encourage observers to review carefully Chapter 4 in their manual and to be thoroughly familiar with the Interview and Observation Forms before going to the school.

Pass out sheets of paper with the names and telephone numbers of people they can call for assistance if they have questions or problems before the sharing and summarizing session.

III. Sharing and Summarizing Session

A. *Objectives for the Session*

This crucially important session takes place very soon after the school observations have been completed. The sharing, summarizing, and planning conducted during this session will determine how the information gained by using the *Program* will lead to school improvement. The leader can expect the observers to return with a wealth of information, questions, and ideas. It will be the leader's responsibility to direct the group in accomplishing three objectives:

1. To share and summarize their observations and assessments.
2. To discuss the implications of the findings for decision making about the school(s).
3. To decide how the information will be used to improve schooling for young adolescents.

Recommended Activities #1, 2, and 3 should be completed to help the assessment team accomplish Objective #1 and begin working on Objective #2. The leader will assume the responsibility for designing activities that help the assessment team accomplish Objectives #2 and 3. Several possible activities are suggested. In selecting activities, the leader will consider the unique purpose, process, and capabilities that have developed within the group.

B. *Recommended Activities*

Activity #1: **Describing Feelings and General Observations and Reviewing the Group's Stated Purpose**

Approximate Time Required: 15 minutes

Instructions:

10 minutes

Leader begins session by asking observers to share some of their feelings about the visit and some *general* observations. Begin discussion by describing some of your own feelings or general observations. Allow this discussion to continue for about 10 minutes, keeping it on a *general* level. Remind the participants that you will talk about details and specific observations in depth in just a few minutes. One way to structure this discussion is to tell the participants that they each have one sentence or one minute, whichever is shorter, to share the *one* general thing they *must* say about the school or their visit before they can delve into sharing and summarizing their bits and pieces of information.

5 minutes

After about 10 minutes, leader refers the group back to their stated purpose, which was decided upon in the first session. (Have this statement written on a piece of newsprint and posted.) Remind them that these are the goals they are working toward as they share information and make decisions during this session. Briefly preview the session by saying something like this: "Tonight we will discuss in detail your observations and assessments, decide on a priority order for issues we are concerned about, and decide on a process for choosing and implementing a plan of action. We have a lot of work to do, so let us get started."

Activity #2: **Sharing and Summarizing Observations and Assessments**

Approximate Time Required: 95 minutes (will vary from group to group)

Instructions:

Note to the leader: Before the session begins, post nine separate sheets of newsprint across the front of the room. Each piece has been labeled beforehand with the name of one of the nine categories and divided in half by a vertical line, like this:

Participation	
Conclusions	Possible Actions

5 minutes

Leader introduces the activity by stating that the group will now share their individual observations and assessments from their school visits and reach some conclusions as a group. Ask participants to open their manuals to Summarizing Sheet #2 (p. 55).

Leader posts newsprint with three tasks listed on it:

1. Discuss the evidence you gathered related to each need.
2. Discuss your individual conclusions about how the school is or is not responsive to each need, and reach a group consensus about the school's response to each need.
3. List possible specific actions that you might like to pursue as a result of your conclusions.

Leader tells the group that they must now compile and summarize the information each person has gained so that they can reach some conclusions as a group and decide how to use the information to improve the school. In order to do this, the group will discuss each need, completing the three tasks listed on the newsprint. The leader will facilitate the discussion and write down key words concerning their conclusions and ideas for possible actions on the nine sheets of prepared newsprint. In task #2 emphasize that the group should reach *specific* conclusions regarding each need. Using the need for positive social interaction as an example, a school may provide many different opportunities for positive social interaction with peers, such as organizing clubs and activities, offering small group work in classrooms, and encouraging friends to sit together. The same school may provide few, if any, opportunities for students and staff to interact in an informal, positive way outside the classroom. Emphasize that in #3 the group is to list several possible actions. Emphasize that these are just *ideas* at this point that would have to be carefully and thoroughly considered before the group made a final decision or took any action. Encourage them to list several ideas for each need, as this will improve the quality of decision making later. Tell the group that you will begin with the plan of taking about 10 minutes on each need, which means the entire process may take 1½ hours. Tell them that you can adjust the amount of time spent on each need if necessary.

Ask if there are questions about what the group is to do. Answer any questions briefly but concisely and begin working on the first need, Safety. Proceed until all of the needs have been discussed.

90 minutes
(This will vary from group to group.)

Group Discussion

Note to the leader: It will be your responsibility to keep the discussion moving at a comfortable but brisk pace. Make sure that everyone who wants to speak has that opportunity, and draw any quiet members into the discussion. Do not allow the discussion to become sidetracked on a particular issue. Lead the group to make conclusions by summarizing the discussion (See **Note to the leader on reaching consensus**, p. 8). Lead the group to brainstorm ideas for possible actions by reminding them that they are only *suggesting* possible actions; thus, no ideas should be ruled out now. Do not allow them to evaluate or pass judgment on specific ideas for possible action. Assure them they will have the opportunity to do that later, but now they should just list ideas. Encourage them to be *specific* in the ideas they suggest, such as, "Begin an advisor-advisee program that will provide each student with an adult who knows and cares about her/him" or "The library should subscribe to a wider variety of magazines that appeal to young adolescents" or "Students' work should be displayed throughout the school to increase their sense of competence" or "The school should work with its staff, students, and parents to develop a philosophy that takes into consideration the unique needs of young adolescents and to put that philosophy into practice." Remember that the purpose of this activity is for the observers to share their findings, assess the school's responsiveness to particular needs, and begin to consider possible actions. Do not let the discussion get sidetracked from this purpose.

If, after discussing two or three needs, you see that the discussion is taking longer than approximately 10 minutes per need, you may want to suggest to the group that you complete this activity and Activity #3, "Deciding Priorities for Study and Action," tonight and then meet again to choose a plan of action. Whatever you decide about using your time, it is your responsibility to call for a break in the discussion for stretching, getting coffee, and relaxing when participants begin to tire of sitting and concentrating. You should provide such a break every hour or so.

Activity #3: **Deciding Priorities for Study and Action**

Approximate Time Required: 35 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader asks participants to review the conclusions and possible actions listed on the newsprint. As they do this, pass out copies of the ballot on page 33. Ask the participants to complete the ballot according to the instructions. Emphasize that the categories are to be ranked from **#9 as most urgent to #1 as least urgent** and that each category must have a different rank.

Note to the leader: At least one person in every group will do the rankings backwards! Be on the alert for this and correct it as soon as you realize it. The reverse rankings can cause problems in the next step of this activity.

2 minutes

Leader answers any questions participants have about completing the ballot and tells them they have two minutes to complete it. Do not allow people to take much longer than two minutes.

15 minutes

While participants are completing the ballots, leader posts newsprint prepared as follows:

NEWSPRINT #1 *(For use in explaining calculations)*

Total Group Points	Individual Rankings	Need	Group Ranking
72	45 + 21 + 6	Diversity	

NEWSPRINT #2 *(For doing calculations)*

Total Group Points	Individual Rankings	Need	Group Ranking
		Safety	
		Academic Effectiveness	
		Diversity	
		Self-exploration	
		Participation	
		Social Interaction	
		Physical Activity	
		Competence and Achievement	
		Structure and Clear Limits	

15 minutes

Leader explains that the group will use their individual rankings to arrive at a group ranking. In order to do this, they will carefully report their individual rankings to you, and you will compute a group ranking. When the first draft of the group ranking is complete, they will have a chance to discuss the group rankings and make any changes they think necessary.

Leader gives instructions similar to the following to the group: "Calculating our draft ranking as a group will take just a few minutes of careful reporting and calculating. I will ask how many people gave each need each ranking from #9-1. Then I will multiply the number of people who gave a particular ranking by the ranking itself. For example, let us say there were 10 people in one group. If five people gave Diversity a ranking

of #9, I would put down 45 (9 × 5 = 45). (Refer to numbers in appropriate columns on Newsprint #1.) If three gave it a ranking of #7, I would put down 21 (7 × 3 = 21). And if the other two people gave it a ranking of #3, I would put down 6 (3 × 2 = 6). Then, I go back and add together 45 + 21 + 6 = 72. This is not hard but it does require concentration, so I am going to ask you to respond quickly by raising your hands high and by correcting any mistakes I make."

Notes to the leader: This method is not difficult, but it can become confusing if the room is not quiet. Practice the method before doing it with a group to make sure you thoroughly understand it. It is helpful if you ask one or two other people to help you count hands and do the multiplication. They can hand their ballots over to someone else who can vote for them. It helps to have briefed these people in advance. An alternative method of completing this calculation is to take up the ballots and excuse the group for a break while you and one other person calculate the total group points. Group totals calculated in this manner best represent the views of the majority of participants. For example, if only one person ranks an item as #9 but seven people rank it as #7 (9 + 49 = 58), then it will be higher in the total rankings than an item only two people ranked as #9 and the other six people ranked as #3 (18 + 18 = 36). Thus, the end result is a more accurate measure of the overall importance of the items to the whole group. This is also why it is so important that individuals rank their items from #9 as most urgent to #1 as least urgent.

When these initial calculations are completed for each category, add up the total number of points for each category and enter the number in the "Total Group Points" column. Then, assign rank #1 to the category with the most points, #2 to the category with the next number of points, on down to #9. Place these draft rankings in the column to the right of the needs, "Group Ranking." At this point, you should have the categories ranked from #1-9, with #1 being the highest rank.

15 minutes

Leader reviews the draft group rankings for the group, pointing out the total number of points each received as well as the ranking. Lead a discussion of the rankings by pointing out that the ranking is tentative and can be changed if the group does not agree with the results of the calculations. Ask if there are specific rankings people would like to discuss or change.

Leader helps group reach consensus on the rankings. Allow about 15 minutes.

Note to the leader: See Module I of the first training session for notes on consensus building. When consensus has been reached, leader summarizes by presenting the rankings and reminding the participants they now have their concerns about the school placed in order from the most urgent to the least urgent.

C. *Possible Activities for Choosing a Plan of Action*

Approximate Time Required: To be determined by the leader. Approximate times for each possible activity are given.

Possible Activity #1: **Summarizing and Preparing to Choose a Plan of Action**

Approximate Time Required: 10 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes

Leader begins the activity by summarizing what the group has accomplished so far:

1) They have a stated purpose, which is to . . .
2) They have a wealth of information about the school.
3) They have a list of specific possible actions they can take to make the school more responsive to each of the needs of young adolescents, and that list is in priority order by need.

The group's task now is to decide upon a process for choosing and implementing a plan of action based on what they have accomplished so far.

5 minutes

Leader points out that the first step in using the information that has been gained is to choose a plan of action. You have information on the school, ideas for possible specific actions, and a set of priorities. Impress upon the group the necessity of carefully examining the strengths, weaknesses, and logistics of the possible actions before choosing one plan of action. Take the group's top priority need and ask the group to think of things they would want to know and people they would need to involve if they chose one of the possible actions listed under that need. This should help them realize that they are ready to begin to study and choose a plan of action but not ready to begin to implement ideas.

Possible Activity #2: **Preparing a Written Report**

Approximate Time Required: Depends on the group and the extensiveness of the report.

Instructions:

Leader tells the group that it is highly recommended that they prepare a written report of their observation and assessment. Such a report will not only help them to clarify and summarize what they have learned, but could be a guide to school improvement for the assessment team and the school. A proposed outline for such a report is presented in a Handout on page 35.

If the group decides to write a report, the leader facilitates the dividing of tasks, setting deadlines, deciding upon content.

Possible Activity #3: **Using Brainstorming and Force Field Analysis to Choose a Plan of Action**

Approximate Time Required: 1 hour, 45 minutes

Instructions:

5 minutes	Leader suggests that the group now needs a general plan of action to help the school become more responsive to its young adolescent students. The group has a priority list of specific actions, but it must have a general approach to implementing these specific actions. The leader may suggest possibilities such as returning to the school for more information, creating task forces or study groups to study and make recommendations on each of the nine categories, preparing a written report of their observation and assessment, conducting conferences with school personnel or the school board to present the findings and talk about how to make the school more responsive, or sponsoring a public seminar to present the findings. Remind the group of the value of the "Bibliography and Resources" section of the *User's Manual*, whatever they choose to do.
15 minutes	Lead the group in brainstorming possible plans of action. Give the following directions: "Let us make a list of possible plans of action. What ideas do you have about how to use what we have learned and to implement the specific actions we have listed? We need a list of ideas from which to choose, so if you will tell us your ideas, I will make a list. We are just listing ideas now. Do not comment or evaluate ideas as they are presented. We will evaluate the ideas and choose a plan of action after we have listed our ideas. The more ideas we have on the list, the better choice we can make." List the ideas for possible plans of action on newsprint, recording key words for each idea. When the group has no more ideas to list, congratulate them for their thoughtfulness and productivity.
15 minutes	Leader helps the group eliminate some ideas and reach consensus on the four or five ideas that are most interesting to the group.
About 10 minutes for each possible plan of action	Beginning with the first possible plan of action, the leader asks the group, "What are the reasons for choosing this plan?" and makes a list of reasons why that plan is a good choice. When this list is complete, ask the group, "What are the reasons *not* to choose this plan?" and make a list of reasons why the plan is not a good choice. Continue this listing of pros and cons for each of the most interesting ideas.
10 minutes	As a result of this listing of pros and cons, the group may want to immediately eliminate some ideas as being impractical or not producing enough benefit to justify the effort required to overcome the cons. Leader helps the group reach consensus on whether to eliminate ideas now.
Depends on the group. Probably no more than 30-45 minutes	If there remain more plans of action than the group can realistically implement, the leader helps the group examine each idea by asking questions like: "What benefits would result if we implemented this plan? How can we overcome the reasons why this is not a good plan? What resources will this plan require? Do we have access to those resources?" The leader helps the group reach consensus on a plan of action. The final plan of action may incorporate one or more of the ideas.
15 minutes	Lead the group in listing tasks to be completed in order to implement the selected plan of action, deciding who will complete which tasks and setting some time limits.

Possible Activity #4: **Conducting an Inventory of the Capabilities of Individual Group Members**

Approximate Time Required: 60 minutes

Instructions:

10 minutes — Leader introduces activity by stating that many resources exist within the group that will be useful in implementing a plan of action. Two of the greatest resources are the capabilities and interests of each group member. Ask the group members to think about something they are especially good at doing. How can that capability be used to accomplish the group's plan of action? Give examples such as writing skills, organizing details, enlisting support from other people, knowing the politics of the community, researching, or getting access to financial support.

Give the group members about three minutes to think about their capabilities and interests.

10 minutes — Ask the members to form pairs. Members will describe to their partners the capabilities they can contribute. The groups will have 10 minutes for discussions.

30 minutes — Ask the total group to help you make a list of the capabilities that exist among the members. Individuals may report their own capabilities or partners may report each other's capabilities. Leader makes a list of names and capabilities on newsprint.

10 minutes — Leader helps the group match individuals with tasks to be completed.

HANDOUT

Young Adolescents and Effective Schools: Myth or Reality

Directions:

1) Place an *M for Myth* beside each statement that is false, although it may be widely accepted as true.

2) Place an *R for Reality* beside each statement that is true.

Young Adolescents

_____ 1. Human beings grow more rapidly during their adolescent growth spurt than during any other time in their lives, except the time in their mothers' wombs.

_____ 2. It is abnormal for girls to have their first menstrual period at 10 years old.

_____ 3. In an 8th grade classroom you would be likely to see an 8- to 10-year span in *physical* development among the students.

_____ 4. Adolescence is a period of storm, stress, and rebellion for nearly all youth.

_____ 5. About 80% of all youth make it through adolescence without undue turmoil.

_____ 6. During adolescence, the peer group replaces the family as the most important people in the adolescent's life.

_____ 7. The ages of 12 to 14 seem to be the time of most disagreements between parents and children, with these disagreements focusing on specific issues such as curfews, rules, homework. These disagreements seem to occur less frequently as the adolescent reaches 15 or 16.

_____ 8. Most adolescents say they respect their parents and their parents' opinions and ideas.

_____ 9. It is normal for young adolescents to sometimes appear to be self-centered and preoccupied with themselves, often to the exclusion of thoughts or concerns about others.

_____ 10. Adolescents usually know and understand the possible consequences of behaviors such as driving or riding in a speeding car, engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse, or hitchhiking on a busy highway.

_____ 11. Twelve- to fourteen-year-olds tend to have lower self-esteem and to think that other people have more negative opinions about them than do younger children or older youth.

_____ 12. Young adolescents have basically the same thinking and reasoning abilities as do adults.

_____ 13. Questioning established rules and reevaluating codes of right and wrong are normal adolescent behaviors.

_____ 14. Seeking behavioral independence is a new issue for children during adolescence. Most of the time, rebelliousness accompanies strivings for independence.

_____ 15. Most young adolescents are concerned about understanding their body changes and incorporating their new physical capabilities and sexual interests into a set of sexual values they have already learned during childhood. While they are curious about the physical sex act, that is usually not their primary sexual concern or interest.

_____ 16. All adolescents think and learn in basically the same way.

_____ 17. Young adolescents are not capable of, or interested in, assuming new responsibilities, having a role in making decisions that affect them, and helping other people.

_____ 18. Young adolescents do not want to be separated from the adult world. They need and want opportunities for positive social interaction with adults.

_____ 19. It is important to most young adolescents to know that they have done something well. They *want* to be successful.

_____ 20. Young adolescents no longer need or want rules and limits.

Schools

_____ 21. If a school is safe and academically effective, it will also be responsive to the developmental needs of young adolescents.

_____ 22. It is not particularly important that the school staff hold positive expectations of all students or believe that *all* children have the ability to learn.

_____ 23. In effective schools, the principal establishes standards for instruction and acts as a resource to the teaching staff on instructional matters.

_____ 24. Students behave better and achieve more when teachers praise their work and show appreciation for their accomplishments rather than focus on their problems and failures.

_____ 25. It is not important that large numbers of students assume responsibilities and participate in the operation of the school.

_____ 26. In effective schools, the staff and students often verbalize and accept many different understandings of the school's purpose, philosophy, expectations, and rules.

_____ 27. Additional resources (money, personnel) will almost always lead to increased school effectiveness.

_____ 28. There is no consistent relationship between school and class size and effectiveness.

_____ 29. Reprimanding students in class, physical punishment, and detention result in improved student behavior.

_____ 30. Effective schools are open to evaluation and change and have established mechanisms for self-evaluation. Students and parents are usually involved in this self-evaluation.

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HANDOUT

Correct Answers for Myth or Reality

Young Adolescents

1. Reality, page 3
2. Myth, page 3
3. Reality, page 3
4. Myth, page 3
5. Reality, page 3
6. Myth, page 4
7. Reality, page 4
8. Reality, page 4
9. Reality, page 4
10. Myth, page 5
11. Reality, page 5
12. Myth, page 5
13. Reality, page 5
14. Myth, page 6
15. Reality, page 6
16. Myth, page 6
17. Myth, page 7
18. Reality, page 7
19. Reality, page 8
20. Myth, page 8

Schools

21. Myth, page 9
22. Myth, pages 9-10
23. Reality, page 10
24. Reality, page 10
25. Myth, page 10
26. Myth, page 10
27. Myth, page 10
28. Reality, page 10
29. Myth, page 10
30. Reality, page 10

Page numbers refer to relevant sections of the *User's Manual.*

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HANDOUT
Ballot

Instructions: Based on your observations of the school, what you have heard others observers say, and the possible actions you have listed as ideas for each need, rank the nine needs from the one you think is most urgent and deserves immediate attention to the one you think is least urgent and can wait a while. Place a *9* beside the category you think is *most urgent*, an *8* beside the next most urgent, a *7* beside the next, and down to *1* beside the *least urgent* category. You may use each number from 9-1 *only once*. Remember: 9 *goes beside the* most *urgent* and 1 *goes beside the* least *urgent.*

Rank

_____ Safety

_____ Academic Effectiveness

_____ Diversity

_____ Self-exploration

_____ Participation

_____ Social Interaction

_____ Physical Activity

_____ Competence and Achievement

_____ Structure and Clear Limits

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HANDOUT

Proposed Outline
for
Middle Grades Assessment Program
Report

I. Background information on the assessment team
   A. Who you are
   B. Why you wanted to conduct a middle grades assessment (your purpose)
   C. How you proceeded

II. Background information on the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*
   A. Why the *Program* was developed (need and purpose)
   B. How the *Program* was developed and who was involved
   C. Philosophy of the Center for Early Adolescence concerning schools

III. Review of early adolescent development and how schools can be responsive

IV. Report of findings
   A. Conclusions for each need of young adolescents, with some examples of supporting evidence
   B. Ideas on possible action in priority order, again presented for each need of young adolescents
   C. General ideas on how to use the information that has been gained

V. Summary and plans for action
   A. Summary of what has been learned about the school's responsiveness to its young adolescent students
   B. What the assessment team plans to do to help improve the school

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Middle Grades Assessment Program
Code for Needs

S = Safety
E = Academic Effectiveness
D = Diversity
SE = Self-Exploration
P = Participation
SI = Social Interaction
Phy = Physical Activity
C = Competence and Achievement
S&L = Structure and Limits